

EPA Comment Number: 550-1

Received: October 5, 1998

To: oppts.homepage
cc:
Subject: ``OPP-00550."
To Whom It May Concern---

My comments on food safety come from a unique point of view. I have NRLA
--Natural Rubber Latex Allergy. This impacts me daily on many levels.

When it comes to food safety I have a few words to say. I cannot eat any food that has
been handled with rubber/latex gloves. If I do I could die.

Every place I go--fast food, markets, malls, restaraunts, festivals (the list goes on and
on) I have to check with the manager before I can even consider eating their product.
This impacts my life daily. Right now I have to wash all of my food before I cook
it--this removes any latex residue and then the heat denatures any left after washing.
Can you imagine washing pastry, bread, muffins or a sandwich?? It just doesn't work.
Even if I check with the manager of an eating establishment he/she doesn't know how
the food was handled before it gets to their kitchen. Spontaneity has left my life as I
have to plan where am I going, what will I encounter and where are we going to eat.

One of the simplest things you could do is ban the use of latex gloves for food
handling.

It is not as if you need the barrier that latex provides against Help B/C, HIV etc. just
for handling food products. An outright ban would save many people--employees and
consumers from undue exposure to latex. My life has been ruined by latex exposure.

I have had to give up my 22 year career as a hospital R.N. because of it. Now my life
will never be the same. There isn't any cure for this. Too many food establishments use
latex gloves unnecessarily. There are many other gloves they can use without risking
this deadly allergy.

Thank YOU for your time and for reading my comments. They are my opinion
and thoughts only--from my point of view as a newly diagnosed NRLA
(Natural Rubber Latex Allergic) R.N.

Sincerely Yours,
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